

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.96
#d65e

SERVICE

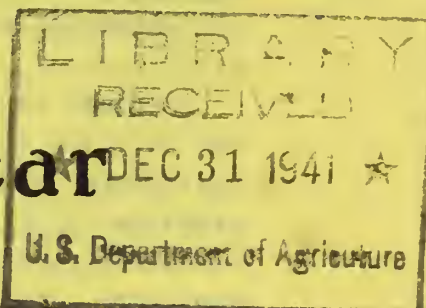
NEWS

ISSUED FOR THE STAFF OF THE SOIL CONSERVATION
SERVICE U. S. D. A. NOT FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

December 31, 1941

No. 27

Toward the New Year



Many centuries ago, a handful of weary shepherds stood at night on a lonely hill. They were dejected and without hope. Most of the world trembled under the armies of Octavian; hatred, treachery and brutality were in the saddle.

But that night the shepherds saw a star. It was a new and brilliant star, and in it the weary shepherds saw something of what they had been seeking. They left their flocks in the field and followed it, a pin point of hope in a sorely troubled world. And they found peace and comfort.

Nearly two thousand years have passed. Once again, man, with all his works, his science, and his progress has driven himself into war. He is master of virtually all that fills this earth. But he has not yet mastered himself. Once more the world is filled with fear and hatred. Again we are looking for a star.

And it is there for us to follow.

Our star is our faith in the strength, the courage, and the integrity of America . . . our faith in our Government and in our Commander in Chief. . . our faith in the rightness of the American way . . . our faith in ourselves.

We have in America what the others are fighting for. Had Germany, Italy, and Japan possessed our fertile fields and grasslands, there might have been no war. We must guard these resources as vigilantly and as valiantly as our fighting forces guard our frontiers.

I urge each and all of you at the beginning of this new year to renew your faith in yourself, in your work, and in the great Nation of which you are apart. Let us meet 1942 confident that the combined efforts of one hundred and thirty million Americans, shoulder to shoulder, form an irresistible force that can and will attain victory and with it the peace, comfort, and security for which all men hope and dream.

Dillon S. Myer
Acting Chief

U. S. Dept. of Agri.
Library
South Building

VENEZUELAN WELCOME CHIEF BENNETT AND HIS MISSION

Dr. Bennett and the members of his soil conservation mission have landed at La Guaira, Venezuela, and have proceeded to the capital city, Caracas, according to information received from the Chief. The South Americans were most cordial in their reception of the party, and "La Esfera"--Venezuelan newspaper published at Caracas--heralded the arrival of the mission with an 8-column headline, pictures, and a feature story on the front page.

A translation of the Spanish news story is printed below:

American technicians conferred yesterday with the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock - First to study irrigation problems of certain sections of Aragua, Carabobo, and Cajedes - Then to travel westward - They will study soil erosion and land use capabilities - Doctor Bennett, head of the Mission, reports an unfavorable impression after viewing the stripped slopes along the highway from La Guaira to Caracas.

The American Technical Mission, which has arrived in this country to make a study of soils, soil erosion, irrigation work, and land use capabilities, conferred yesterday afternoon with the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock. The head of the Mission, Dr. H. H. Bennett, discussed at some length with the Minister the various angles of soil and water conservation, which is his specialty.

While the conversation continued between these two in English, certain Venezuelans also present called attention to the paradox existing between the floor of the room, of mosaic design representing the Nazi swastika, and the democratic spirit of a great power which provides for such liberal collaboration between countries as that which the Mission is furnishing. Doctor Bennett, in the course of the conversation, emphasized the fact that soil conservation in so large a country requires, above all, the cooperation of the population.

According to our information, this Mission should have arrived in this country

some time ago. But certain former Ministers opposed the idea. We do not know if it was one of these who selected such fancy floor tiles!

First Job of the Mission

During the first week the Mission will go to Carabobo, Aragua, and Cojedes for the purpose of studying the areas to be irrigated. Then, accompanied by four Venezuelan technicians (Drs. Tejera and Carvajal; Sr. Rugeles, soil specialist; and Sr. De la Cava, agronomist), the Mission will proceed to the western part of the Republic, returning by the way of Barinas. It is possible that they will avail themselves of the opportunity to visit the Lake Maracaibo region.

According to the Minister of Agriculture, the Mission will concern itself particularly with a study of the thickly populated areas. For that reason the American technicians will not go to such places as Gran Sabana, Amazonas, etc., where the population is extremely sparse and transportation facilities poor.

After a brief trip through the interior, the Mission will outline a mutually satisfactory soil conservation work plan.

Statement by Dr. Bennett

Dr. H. H. Bennett is Chief of the United States Soil Conservation Service, which has more than 12,000 employees. Accompanying him as members of the Mission are: Dr. D. J. Hubbell, soil specialist; Mr.

(Continued on page 3)

VENEZUELAN WELCOME CHIEF

(Continued from page 2)

William Hull, agricultural engineer; and Mr. James E. Caudle, geologist.

Doctor Bennett stated that organized scientific soil conservation in the United States commenced in 1933, under the Roosevelt Administration, after long and patient preparatory study. First there were set up demonstration projects for American farmers to observe the practical advantages of soil conservation. More than a hundred conservation measures were tested and applied (terracing, strip cropping, planting of slopes to grama grass, etc.) according to the peculiarities of each locality. Today thousands of American farmers are enjoying the benefits of conservation. And, of the 48 States of the Union, 42 have adopted conservation laws. There are now more than 365,000,000 acres on which soil conservation measures are in effect.

The system of terracing used by the Incas of Peru has been adapted to use in California by the citrus growers as well as in Puerto Rico. But, in Doctor Bennett's opinion, this system is costly. Rather he advocates as an erosion control measure the planting of "kudzu", a Japanese plant, which is also desirable as a feed for livestock. This plant, which is grown in great quantities in the United States, may be easily cultivated in Venezuela.

When we asked Doctor Bennett for his impressions of the eroded slopes along the highway from La Guaira to Caracas, he appeared somewhat troubled. He said, "My impression was not at all favorable. I hope we don't find such conditions in our examination of the interior."

At which one of the Venezuelan agronomists whispered to us, "What will Doctor Bennett say when he sees the soils of Larra!"

--Juan R. Porter

R. Y. BAILEY IS HONORED BY "PROGRESSIVE FARMER"

R. Y. Bailey, Chief of the Regional Agronomy Division of the Southeastern Region, was recently named by "The Progressive Farmer" as one of the recipients of its "Man of the Year Awards for 1941." Annually, the editors of this farm paper select men for these awards whose work has resulted in noteworthy improvement in Southern agriculture.

Commenting on the selection of Mr. Bailey for one of the awards, the farm paper in its December issue said:

"The holding and enriching of our lands has been and will continue to be for many years among our most important problems. For his original and far-reaching contributions in this field, we chose for Alabama, R. Y. Bailey, now regional agronomist of the Soil Conservation Service.

"Mr. Bailey comes of a family of brothers that has served the farmers of Alabama long and well. 'Dick' himself had been county agent and agronomist of the Alabama Experiment Station before he took charge in 1934 of the first work of its kind in Alabama, the Dadeville Soil Conservation Demonstration Project. From Dadeville he was promoted to state coordinator and then to his present position serving the entire Southeast.

"Mr. Bailey was the first man to encourage the wide use of kudzu for forage and soil saving. In the spring of 1935 he encouraged farmers in the Dadeville area to plant two million kudzu crowns on 2,000 acres thought by many then to be 'the largest-scale big fool thing that had ever been done in agriculture.' Since 1934, Alabama has gone from 3,000 to 110,000 acres set to kudzu.

"Under his supervision, successful methods of propagating kudzu from vine
(Continued on page 7)

OVER 600 EMPLOYEES IN MILITARY SERVICE

Military furloughs have been granted to 601 SCS employees, according to estimates made in November by the Personnel Management Division. Of those on furlough, 36 men have returned to duty in SCS after receiving honorable discharges from military service.

Furloughs have been granted recently to the following men in SCS:

Washington, D. C.: Joseph Crown.

Region I: Paul A. Anderson; Lazar W. Bariton; Clyde A. Gilna; John J. Gude.

Region II: Joseph R. Adair, Jr.; Cecil W. Chapman; William E. Friel, 1st Lt. FA-Res; John B. Hungerford; James R. Hurst; Archie A. Langley; Brice M. Latham, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Fred W. Mashey, Jr.; Ben H. Mayfield; Walker P. Newman; Frank F. Nickels, 1st Lt. CA-Res; Clarence L. Turnipseed, Jr., 1st Lt. FA-Res; William B. Wingfield, 1st Lt. FA-Res.

Region III: Stuart C. Hildebrand; Stanley B. Zimmerman.

Region IV: Oscar L. Billimek, 2nd Lt. Inf-Res; Robert E. Daniell; John F. Douglass; Eugene N. Gatlin, Capt. Inf-Res; Clark A. Jacobs; Joseph N. Littlefield; Albert M. McConnell; Robert B. Moore, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Walter O. Mosley, Jr.; Wesley John Neumann, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Roy A. Nichols; Edgar F. Pohlmann; Victor E. Schember; Freddie M. Shaw; John H. Wheatley, Jr., 1st Lt. FA-Res.

Region V: William Lee Anderson; Robert J. Bartelme; Harold J. Behrens, 2nd Lt. Engr-Res; John H. Gibson; James N. Marsh; Lyle C. Molstad, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Merle Rust; William H. Tetrud, 1st Lt. Engr-Res; Emerson Wolfe.

(Continued in next column)

YES, THE FIELD DOES READ SERVICE NEWS

"The boys in the field are reading Service News from cover to cover," says Charles D. Jarrett, chief of the regional Information Division at Berkeley, Calif., and to prove it he sends us the following item:

"At the bottom of Page 9 of the September 6 issue of Service News something of a record was established in the showing of 'A Heritage We Guard.'

"Down at Watsonville, California, the boys started checking back on their records and Clyde M. Seibert, Assistant Area Conservationist states that 'the Corralitos Project records indicate that from March 9th to 22nd, 1938, a period of 14 days, the motion picture "The River" was shown 37 times to a total audience of 6053 persons.' These showings were in connection with the California Conservation Week activities of that year by the Project, with L. Thornton Powell in charge of the activity."

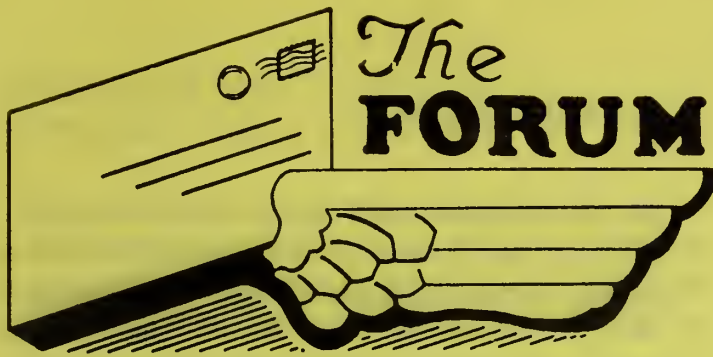
Region VI: Lewis H. Bacon; Joe L. Harris; Murray E. Matter; John B. Payne; John A. Shetlar; Abraham J. Sprecher; James B. Spurlin; Jerra Wilcox; Paul F. Wilson.

Region VII: Ted G. Cordner, 2nd Lt. Inf-Res; Ray A. Griffin, 2nd Lt. Inf-Res; Walter C. Langendorf; Fred E. Larson, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Orvin S. Meierhenry; Edward J. Pavelka, 1st Lt. Inf-Res; Addison D. Reed.

Region VIII: Dave W. Edwards; Willie J. Frederick; J. D. Hancock; Dale E. Hodgell; Homer D. McGhie.

Region IX: William C. Andreasen; Rollo J. McKinney, Capt. Engr-Res.

Region X: Frank L. Brooks, Jr.; Albert J. Geiger.



LAND USE MAPS

In the Service News of October 31, 1941, I saw an article headed "Here's a New Angle for Land Use Capability." This article spoke of the possibility of dividing land according to capability classes in the division of estates.

This idea is nothing new down in the Piedmont Soil Conservation District of Georgia. It has been used now for more than a year and some 15,000 acres or more have been divided into farms where the land use capability classes governed the divisions, with each new farm resulting from the division containing lands of all five classes. The divisions were made solely from the land capability standpoint, every farm receiving its share of good land as well as poor land. Each farm received the required acreage of cultivated land and enough land for pasture and permanent hay and woodland to supply the needs of the farm.

The boundaries of such a farm are rather irregular in order to provide the proper balance of all classes of land for each sub-division. We have found this method of sub-dividing farm lands to be practical and where used the planning technician has an easier time in writing up the farm plan.

M. E. G.

GREEN TAPE

On Tuesday, November 18, 1941 our regional office received a telegram from the Washington office to the effect that Thurs-

day, November 20 had been set aside as the day for all Federal employees to count their blessings. The regional office, in turn, wired the area offices, research stations and nurseries. The area offices, again in turn, wired or 'phoned the various units under their supervision that those lucky enough to afford a turkey should put said fowl to the axe two days hence. I take it for granted that something like this was happening in each of the other regions at the same time, just as it has happened many times in the past.

Now, all this wiring and 'phoning cost our Government considerable money, and there are those among us who believe that it could have been put to better use. Of course we all enjoyed the holiday. In fact we had been looking forward to the 20th with a great deal of expectation, having read in the papers early in the month that the President had proclaimed that date Thanksgiving Day.

We are accustomed to red tape, but this particular tape has a dark green tinge shot through with silk threads.

M. B. R.

- 0 -

4- STAR SAFETY AWARD

The first 4-gold-star safety certificate issued by SCS to a CCC camp has been awarded to the Stockton, Ill., camp (SCS-7) for its unprecedented record of 4 years without a lost-time injury.

In forwarding the certificate to Joel R. Bogue, superintendent of the camp, Dr. Bennett sent a message in which he said:

"It is a real pleasure for me to extend my congratulations to Camp SCS-7 for the distinction of becoming the first CCC camp to complete four successive years without a lost-time injury. Keep up the good work."

REGIONS REPORT SALES OF BONDS AND STAMPS

The sale of Defense Bonds and Stamps is getting off to a good start in the regional and area offices. Latest reports from the field, as of November 15, show bond purchases amounting to \$117,897.95 and stamp sales totaling \$16,248.85 which make a grand total of \$134,146.80 invested in Funds-for-Freedom.

Cumulative sales totals through the November 15 pay period, as reported by regions, are listed below:

| Reg. | Bonds | Stamps | Total |
|-------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 1 | \$13,684.45 | \$1,189.55 | \$14,874.00 |
| 2 | 11,411.50 | 3,350.40 | 14,761.90 |
| 3 | 16,756.25 | 1,633.20 | 18,389.45 |
| 4 | 15,288.00 | 2,419.70 | 17,707.70 |
| 5 | 10,812.50 | 1,442.10 | 12,254.60 |
| 6 | 23,599.25 | 1,673.60 | 25,272.85 |
| 7 | 4,775.00 | 909.50 | 5,684.50 |
| 8 | 13,612.50 | 1,580.65 | 15,193.15 |
| 9 | 7,271.00 | 1,718.65 | 8,989.65 |
| 10 | 687.50 | 331.50 | 1,019.00 |
| Total | 117,897.95 | 16,248.85 | 134,146.80 |

In the next issue of Service News we shall publish the report of percentages of employee participation both for Washington and the regions.

0

A. B. Hurt, of the Beltsville laboratory and a student in the Red Cross first aid class, made use of his new knowledge when he applied a traction splint for a woman who had broken her leg on the Beltsville golf course. The woman and the spectators who gathered at the accident thought she had merely sprained an ankle, but Mr. Hurt was able to determine quickly the seriousness of the accident and render proper treatment. The doctor who set the broken bone said that Hurt had saved possible permanent injury to the bone through his accurate diagnosis and first aid treatment.

RESEARCH NEWS

A new groundwater gage which can be read from an airplane has been designed for use in the Everglades of Florida by C. Kay Davis, area conservator and B. S. Clayton, associate drainage engineer of the Division of Drainage. The gage was developed so that weekly readings of the groundwater table elevation in the interior of the Everglades can be obtained without requiring observers to travel thirty miles through an area where a breakdown or accident could be extremely hazardous. It is expected that five gages will be installed, each of which will be observed weekly by airplanes. Visual observation from the plane will be supplemented by photographs taken as the plane flies over each gage to prevent errors in reading at high speed.

- 0 -

R. L. Davis, associate agronomist at the Southern Piedmont Experiment Station, Watkinsville, Ga., in cooperation with other researchers, has developed an economical way to propagate St. Augustine grass. This development will be of great importance in the SCS pasture program of Florida. The State Experiment Station at Belle, Fla., reported this grass used as food for livestock produced more pounds of meat per acre consumed than any other they had tested, but the old method of propagation made the planting costs so high it was impossible to propagate it commercially.

0

An experimental potato planter has been developed by J. W. Slosser, SCS man at Presque Isle, Maine, for erosion control purposes in connection with potato culture. Fields with interceptions and planted on the contour with this machine suffered no appreciable damage from a storm that completely ruined fields on lesser slopes that had been planted in the usual manner.

UTAH DISTRICT AIDS IN PRISON FARM PLANNING

The Utah State Prison Board and the West Salt Lake County Soil Conservation District have entered into an agreement whereby SCS is furnishing technical assistance in planning a new 1,009-acre prison farm where 600 prisoners will eventually be kept. Farm plans are being made for a 10-year period.

A submerged concrete irrigation system has been established on 721 acres. A 21-acre irrigated orchard has been planted on the contour on a slope adjoining the highway. Since noxious weeds are a serious problem, 163 acres will be set aside for weed control until 1944. A 2-acre woodlot will be planted.

Permanent hay is to be increased from 95 to 300 acres. Seventy-four acres will be planted in vegetables. In fact, the prison farm will produce all of the wheat, milk, butter, vegetables, and poultry that the prisoners will need, affecting a saving for the State of Utah and giving prisoners a chance to work in the sunshine and fresh air.

Warden Harris is interested in soil conservation and also the conservation of human lives. He believes even the most calloused criminal may be rehabilitated by good honest farm labor. At present, 60 "trusties" are doing most of the farm labor. After new cell-block units are completed, the entire State penitentiary will be moved from Salt Lake City to the prison farm.

- 0 -

Angus McDonald, information specialist, has been notified by the Houghton Mifflin Company that his book, "Old McDonald Had a Farm," has been selected by the Literary Guild as the book offering for April. The book, whose publication has been postponed because of the Literary Guild's selection, will appear on the bookstands on April 1.

R. Y. BAILEY HONORED

(Continued from page 3)

cuttings, producing kudzu plants from seed, storing kudzu crowns and seedlings were developed. He pushed lespedeza sericea as a soil-conserving crop on steep slopes not too badly washed.

"Under his direction and supervision, Alabama and other states of the Southeast have developed a complete conservation program which combines thick growing crops with engineering structures where previously terracing and winter legumes were considered by many as adequate for saving soils.

"All these and many other contributions can best be summed up by saying that for the last seven years Mr. Bailey has spent most of his time thinking and talking of ways and means to aid farmers in saving their land and making it richer, and yet secure from every acre the maximum contribution to farm income."

- 0 -

Some Maryland farmers are trading lands and are using land use capability maps to establish equitable values.

Glenn Rule, head of the Education Section, reports he recently heard a Maryland farmer say, "Some day farmers are going to see the advantage of trading land with each other. A scattered few are doing it now. I may have some land that would serve my neighbor better than it does me. And he may have land that really should be in my farm. These land use capability maps would help us trade on an equitable basis."

- 0 -

Fifty-six radio stations are now broadcasting the programs, "This Land We Defend", the series of ten transcribed radio shows recently produced by SCS. Many more stations will use the series as soon as time and platters are available.

FIELD MEMORANDA

904-S (1) Military furlough of employees who enlist voluntarily. (2) Date of induction. (Hereafter all employees who enter the armed forces, including those who enlist voluntarily, will be placed on furlough for military training.)

1039 Budget and Finance Circular 490 (Fiscal Irregularities). (Calls attention to GAO statement requiring observance under all circumstances Department laws and regulations.)

904-T Re-employment benefits for enlisted men. (Employees who enlisted subsequent to May 1, 1940 will be provided with re-employment benefits.)

904-U Return to duty after military service. (Application for restoration must be made within 40 days after completion of military duty.)

904-W Leave and restoration rights involved by military furloughs. (Employees who occupy positions "subject to the return of an employee from military training and service" and who are ordered to active duty will be entitled to the usual restoration rights.)

1040 Guards and caretakers. (Outlines SCS policies with regard to caretaking service.)

1041 Approval of membership in military or naval organizations. (Employees may accept appointments as officers in the Army or U. S. Naval Reserve or Marine Corps Reserve, provided such appointments are approved by the Chief of Service or the Chief of the Personnel Management Division.)

1042 Designation of Mr. T. Roy Reid as Director of Personnel. (Announcement
(Continued in next column))

PRINTERS' INK

"Stop Those Sand Dunes" by Wayne Miles, associate soil conservationist at Tucumcari, N. Mex., in the December *The Cattleman*.

"The Program of the United States Soil Conservation Service" by H. H. Bennett in the October *Monthly Bulletin of Agricultural Science and Practice*.

OFF THE PRESS

"Hydrologic Data: North Appalachian Experimental Watershed, Coshocton, Ohio, 1939" by the Hydrologic Division, Office of Research, SCS. USDA Hydrologic Bulletin No. 1.

- 0

At Urbana, Ill., experiments indicate that mulching may increase yields as well as furnish protection against erosion. Plots of soybeans where usual farm practices were used yielded 2.64 tons of hay per acre but on similar plots where a straw mulch was used the yield averaged 3.28 tons per acre.

1043 of Mr. Reid's appointment by the Secretary.)

1043 (a) Furlough for conscientious objectors. (b) Leave for employees who enlist. (Conscientious objectors are granted certain privileges of re-employment, and employees who enlisted voluntarily after May 1, 1940 will be reccredited with accrued annual leave upon restoration to their civilian positions.)

1044 General assent for the examination and certification of Department employees. (USDA employees may take Civil Service examinations or be certified from registers maintained by the Civil Service without written assent of the bureau or office in which they are employed.)